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FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1186
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RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL IMMEDIATE 0440
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE 4475
RUEHFL/AMCONSUL FLORENCE IMMEDIATE 3303
RUEHMIL/AMCONSUL MILAN IMMEDIATE 9669
RUEHNP/AMCONSUL NAPLES IMMEDIATE 3460
RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 ROME 001406

SIPDIS

FROM THE AMBASSADOR TO THE SECRETARY

EO 12958 DECL: 11/15/2018
TAGS FREL, PGOV, NATO, IT
SUBJECT: SCENESETTER FOR YOUR DECEMBER 3 VISIT TO ROME

REF: A) ROME 1386 B) ROME 1320
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Classified By: Ambassador Ronald P. Spogli for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (C) Summary. 1. (C) Summary. The political conditions in Italy are dramatically different from the conditions that existed when you last vi

2. (C) Our reenergized cooperation with Berlusconi, however, does not extend to all issues. Berlusconi's close, personal relationship with Put
Domestic Politics: Berlusconi Firmly in Control

3. (C) Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi is in an enviable position domestically, enjoying so comfortable a majority in Parliament that he can

4. (C) Berlusconi has made a few missteps, such as his awkward attempt at a joke, in referring to President-Elect Obama as "suntanned", and ce
Transatlantic Relationship: All Russia All the Time

5. (C) Berlusconi's close personal (and, some suspect, financial) relationship with Putin has led him to champion unquestioningly every initia
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European energy strategy. As a result of his short-sighted obsession with Russia, Berlusconi has thrown his support behind Medvedev's calls for
Muddying the Waters on Iran

6. (C) Berlusconi came into power with a tough public stance on Iran and showed himself eager to support the P5-plus-1. This initial clarity h
Economic Crisis: Banks OK, but economy suffers

7. (C) Stodgy, old fashioned banking practices allowed Italy to avoid being directly hit by the global financial melt-down. Italian banks simp

8. (C) Italy's Finance Minister, Giulio Tremonti, often supports protectionist, anti-globalization positions, but in the ongoing discussion of
Little Room for Expanding Presence in Afghanistan

9. (C) Italy is the sixth-largest contributor to ISAF with 2,200 troops, a PRT in Herat, and command of RC-West. Berlusconi has made good on h
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concerns. You should stress that Italy's decision to reduce defense expenditures (which will put them even further below the NATO-recommended t
Rolling out AFRICOM

10. (C) Your visit will provide an opportunity to highlight our cooperation on Africa through Italy's hosting of portions of AFRICOM. GOI offi

11. (C) The GOI responded positively to our proposal for a joint announcement of the shift during your visit to Italy. A joint statement acknc
When Will the Honeymoon End?

12. (C) Most of our contacts within Berlusconi's own party as well as in the center left expect this government's honeymoon period to end in t
Conclusion

13. (C) Berlusconi's shoot-from-the-hip style and frequent gaffes frequently create bumps in the relationship with the U.S. Nevertheless, he s